(b) if so, the policies that Government is formulating to cope up this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT PALA): (a) and (b) As per the information provided by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), the MoUD have not received information from cities and towns that they are facing water crisis. However, there are instance of shortages particularly due to uneven distribution of available water resources.

The National Water Policy assigns highest priority to drinking water and provides that drinking water needs of human beings and animal should be the first charge on any available water.

With a view to address the various issues related to urban water supply, MoUD has launched Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) programmes (in State Sector) in December 2005 to facilitate additional Central Assistance for providing infrastructure in metropolitan cities/urban areas of the country. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) covers 65 cities with population above one million as per 2001 census including 35 metro cities, State capitals and other important cities, pilgrimage centres etc. the UIDSSMT scheme is for all the other towns.

Further, with a view to ensure reliable adequate and sustainable water supply service in urban areas, the MoUD has mandated Service Level Benchmarks in urban water supply sector for projects availing additional central assistance as follows:

S.No.	Indicator	Benchmark
1.	Coverage of WS connections (population)	100%
2.	Per capita availability of WS at consumer end	135 Lpcd
3.	Extent of metering of water supply connections	100%
4.	Extent of Non-Revenue Water	15%
5.	Continuity of Water Supply	24x7
6.	Efficiency of redressal of Customer Complaints	80%
7.	Quality of Water Supplied	100%
8.	Cost recovery of in Water Supply Services	100%
9.	Efficiency in collection of Water Supply Charges	90%
10.	Number of persons receiving less than 70 litre per capita per day	0

Water Security

704. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an urgent need for water conservation and rainwater harvesting and also to make the people aware of the need to create drinking water security;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has since taken any steps to create water security in the country; and

(c) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT PALA): (a) to (c) In view of growing population, industrialization and urbanization, the demand for water to meet various requirements including that for drinking water supply is continuously increasing. Further, there is temporal and spatial variation in the availability of water in the country. Therefore, awareness of stakeholders for rain water harvesting and water conservation assumes importance.

Drinking water has been assigned the top most priority in the National Water Policy. Drinking water is also one of the six components of Bharat Nirman, The measures taken by the Government for promoting awareness and conservation of water include implementation of the schemes of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dugwells, demonstrative artificial recharge projects, Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme and Repair, Renovation and Restoration Water Bodies.

New Sea Wall

705. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the position of project proposal submitted by State Government of Kerala to construct new sea wall and the reformation of old sea walls in the coastal belt of Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT PALA): The proposal from the State Government of Kerala regarding one scheme titled "Construction of sea wall for a length of 1680m between Azhikode and Eriyad in Thrissur district" at an estimated cost of Rs. 3.00 Cr. was included under centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Critical anti-erosion works in coastal and other than Ganga basin States" under implementation during the X Plan. An amount of Rs.50.00 lakh was released as 1st instalment to the State Government as Central share during the year 2004-05. State Govt of Kerala has been requested to furnish Utilization Certificate for release of 2nd instalment of Central share.

In addition, the State Government of Kerala submitted a proposal for construction of 52.665 km long new sea walls and reformation of 59.448 km length of old damaged sea walls besides 21 groynes to Central Water Commission for inclusion under National Coastal Protection Project (NCPP) for external assistance. This Ministry of Water Resources has requested the Department of Economic Affairs for external assistance for the Project.

Strengthening of Kosi Dam

†706.SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.